



Deborah A. Gist  
Commissioner

**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**  
**ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

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Robert O'Brien, Superintendent  
Smithfield School Department  
49 Farnum Pike  
Smithfield, RI 02917

February 15, 2010

Dear Superintendent O'Brien,

Congratulations to you and to your school community on successfully completing the 2010 Commissioner's Review.

As you are aware, in January 2008, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education approved a new set of secondary-school regulations. These regulations require local educational agencies (LEAs) to develop a means to certify that, beginning with the Class of 2012, all students demonstrate the required proficiencies in order to graduate. Additionally, the regulations specify that the Commissioner review the level of implementation of the Diploma System in each LEA, every two years.

The review process for 2010 was primarily focused on access and opportunity, development of local assessments including standard-setting; and personalization, focused on the ILP. The review criteria for the 2010 Commissioner's Review were used to determine the validity and effectiveness of implementation of each LEA's diploma system as well as, the level of progress made toward meeting the 2012 criteria. Across the state, sufficiency and standard setting are identified as critical areas of need. The expectation for 2012 is that all districts adopt clear policies that define proficiencies, describe sufficiency and establish the standard setting process for graduation decisions.

Through review of documentation and on-site collection of evidence, Commissioner's Review teams reviewed the evidence of implementation of the Diploma System in each LEA. As a result of this review process, it is determined that **Smithfield successfully completed the 2010 review process and has made significant progress toward meeting the 2012 criteria.**

To meet the 2012 criteria for full approval will require maintenance of effort in those areas of the diploma system that are well implemented and greater attention to the identified gaps in your diploma system. The gaps in your system that must be addressed before full approval can be

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awarded for 2012 are identified in the complete CR Final Feedback Report previously sent following your site visit.

The following represent *a few of the key findings* from the district review.

In your District, there was evidence of:

- Data collection and analysis of a variety of data sources resulting in informed decisions that support structures and programs with the goal of increasing graduation rate and decreasing drop outs - sufficiency map and transcript analysis to determine access and opportunity
- Numeracy supports –development of individual numeracy program
- Strong, collegial and collaborative leadership and support of the Diploma System - excellent articulation between and among central office, middle level to high school

The following items represent key areas that need more immediate and focused attention:

- Ensure that all new courses and assessments are fully aligned to the Math and ELA GSEs and complete development of school-wide rubrics in the six core areas
- The role of the Comprehensive Course Assessment must be clarified as one of your proficiency measures - ensure validation process is implemented as planned
- Complete advisory curriculum to ensure consistent access and opportunity for all students to engage in the ILP process

Finally, enclosed is a copy of a parent/guardian letter to use in your communications with key stakeholders regarding the results of the 2010 Commissioner's Review.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence or to obtain the complete copy of the Commissioner's Review for your district, call the Office of Middle and High School Redesign, at 222-8461.

Sincerely,



Deborah Gist, Commissioner

Enclosure: Parent letter

cc: Daniel Kelly, HS Principal  
Laurie Beauvais, MS Principal  
Michael Twohey, Union President  
Richard Iannitelli, School Committee Chairperson